Unclaimed money in nationalised banks

3703. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether large sum of unclaimed money is lying with nationalised banks;

(b) if so, the total sum of such money lying with these banks; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to utilize this money in a constructive way?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) As per the Reserve Bank of India, Rs. 134.73 crore and Rs. 468.89 crore are lying with the State Bank of India Group and 19 Nationalised Banks respectively as unclaimed deposits as on 31st December, 2001.

(c) The Reserve Bank of India advised the banks on 28.1.1992 to notify in terms deposit application form to contain a direction for disposal of deposits on maturity. Further, these instructions were reiterated on 16.1.2001 and the banks were advised to ensure sending intimation of impending due date of deposit well in advance to their depositors as a rule in order to extend better customer service. The banks are generally following RBI's instructions in this regard. There is a proposal to establish a Depositors' Protection Trust Fund by the Reserve Bank of India providing for transfer of the amount lying in Unclaimed Accounts.

Evasion of tax by private hospitals

3704. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 65 per cent of the Non-banking finance companies and a large number of private hospitals/nursing homes still evade the tax net;

(b) if so, whether more than 12,000 such NBCs are still to be assessed for tax;

(c) whether the short levy of tax on these uncovered segments amounts to more than rupees 1000 crore; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to identify the prospective assesses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) The C&AG in their Report No. 12A of 2002 (for the year ended 31.3.2001) laid down in Parliament on 15th March, 2002 have included the results of the Review on Private Banking Companies and Non-Banking Financial Companies and Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes. As per this report, in the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and West Bengal, 12,210 (or 66%) of the 18435 NBFCs identified by Audit were not in the tax net. As per the report of C&AG irregularities on account of failure to follow the statutory provisions resulted in total short levy of tax of Rs. 104177.18 lakh in 1587 cases.

(d) The Central Information Branch (C1B) of the Income Tax Department collects information regarding prospective assesses and passes on the same to the Commissioners of Income tax concerned for further necessary action. The territorial Assessing Officers also collect information in their territorial jurisdiction, from time to time.

Excise duty on palm oil and sugar

3705. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a long time demand to increase excise duty on palm oil and sugar to protect the interest of farmers; and

(b) if so, what is Government's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.